

Message Text

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15

ACTION AGR-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SWF-01 EB-06 NIC-01 SAJ-01

COME-00 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 /058 W

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FM AMCONSUL ZAGREB

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2779

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

UNCLAS ZAGREB 0971

PASS AGRICULTURE

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS : EAGR, ECRE, YO

SUBJECT : HEAVY RAINS AND PERSISTENT FLOODING OF SAVA RIVER

MAY CAUSE SERIOUS AGRICULTURAL DAMAGE

1. HEAVY AND UNSEASONAL RAINS DURING THE PAST FOUR WEEKS HAVE HAMPERED CORN AND OTHER HARVESTS AND VERY SERIOUSLY DELAYED WHEAT PLANTINGS THROUGHOUT OUR CONSULAR DISTRICT; THERE HAS BEEN SIGNIFICANT FLOODING FROM THE SAVA AND ITS TRIBUTARIES. WHILE DIKES PROTECTING URBAN AREAS HAVE SO FAR HELD UP, MANY VILLAGES ARE REPORTEDLY EITHER FLOODED OR CUT OFF; GROUNDWATER IN SOME RURAL AREAS HAS BECOME POLLUTED. SOME 300,000 HECTARES OF AGRICULTURAL LAND IN CROATIA ALONE ARE SAID TO BE SERIOUSLY AFFECTED BY THE HIGH WATERS WHICH IN MANY AREAS HAVE NOW BEEN STAGNATING FOR MORE THAN TWO WEEKS.

2. ACCORDING TO THE CROATIAN PRESS ON OCTOBER 23 1974, THE WORST MAY BE YET TO COME. NEW RAINS ARE EXPECTED; THERE IS SNOW ACCUMULATION AT FAIRLY LOW ELEVATIONS IN THE MOUNTAINS; AND HIGH WATER MARKS ARE EXPECTED ON THE MIDDLE AND LOWER SAVA BY THIS WEEKEND.

3. LOCAL MEDIA HAS DEVOTED SUBSTANTIAL ATTENTION TO THE FLOODS

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FOR THE PAST TWO WEEKS. THESE REPORTS DESCRIBE THE OPERATION

OF LOCAL TASK FORCES AND NOTE THAT ARMY AND ALL PEOPLES' DEFENSE
UNITS HAVE ALSO BEEN CALLED UPON TO ASSIST IN DIKE REINFORCE-
MENT AND IN OTHER ENGINEERING AND RELIEF OPERATIONS.

4. SPEAKING ON TV, OCTOBER 22, IVO PERISIN, PRESIDENT OF
CROATIA'S PARLIAMENT, NOTED THAT THE FLOOD MAY HAVE UNDERMINED
WHAT HAD APPEARED TO BE A SUCCESSFUL AGRICULTURAL YEAR. HE
STRESSED THAT COMPREHENSIVE REGULATION OF THE SAVA AND ITS
TRIBUTARIES SHOULD BE ACCORDED PRIORITY ATTENTION. HE DECLARED
THAT THE BEHAVIOR OF THE SAVA CONSTITUTES A PROBLEM NOT JUST
FOR CROATIA BUT FOR THREE OTHER REPUBLICS, THUS MAKING IT A
NATIONAL PROBLEM REQUIRING JOINT, COORDINATED ACTION.
KAISER

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